

patient is immediately relieved ; (3) he does not need sedatives ; (4) he can carry on his work.

### Summary

A method of relieving the lightning pains of tabes dorsalis by local anæsthesia is described, whereby the patient can be kept free from pain

and at work until cure is effected by anti-syphilitic treatment.

I am indebted to Dr. Robert Lees for his interest and help.

### REFERENCE

Alajouanine T., Thurel, R., Brunelli, A. (1936). *Rev. Neurol.*, 65, 60.

## BOOK REVIEW

### THE GIRLS THEY LEFT BEHIND

By Grethe Hartmann

(Ejnar Munksgaard, Copenhagen. 1946. Pp. 207. 26 tables and graphs. Price D.cr. 12—English price 15s.)

Psychological studies in prostitution, such as those of Flexner and of Kemp, were made at a time when the chief instrument of investigation was the intelligence test, and their conclusion that prostitutes were drawn from the lower grade mentalities is now familiar. Recently further studies have been undertaken, using the newer methods of psychopathology and aimed not at the investigation of the hardened prostitute but at evaluation of the personality trends in what Glover calls the "larval prostitute." This book, in spite of its faintly ridiculous title, is another contribution to such studies, and the subject matter consists of girls and women who were found to be sex contacts of German troops during their occupation of Denmark in the recent war. The author emphasizes that in most cases the women concerned were not of the hardened prostitute type, and in fact are better described as "half prostitutes."

The difficulty which faces the non-psychiatrist in making an appreciation of all these studies is chiefly that of avoiding the suspicion that, in such a highly subjective technique as psychiatric investigation, the research workers are not infrequently led into finding what they set out to find ; in other words reading into their results the hypotheses with which they started. It is, for example, a frequently expressed conclusion nowadays that "the broken home" is of prime impor-

tance in causing juvenile delinquency, sexual maladjustment, divorce, and the pursuit of multiple, often entirely casual, sexual relations which is often called sexual promiscuity. Does "the broken home" or marked parental discord, however, inevitably lead to these abnormal behaviour patterns? If not, what factor or factors are responsible for the discrepancy? Does it not too often seem that the alleged and fashionably pilloried sins of the parents are used by the young and those interested in the young as a convenient and facile excuse for absence of self-discipline? Or does all the ingenuity of the psychiatrist serve but to reiterate in modern jargon the old refrain "there's no place like home"?

Altogether Dr. Hartmann investigated the behaviour patterns and family backgrounds of two hundred and twenty seven girls, and the detailed case histories take up about three-fifths of the book. Dealing with the incidence of venereal disease amongst the general population of Denmark, the author gives some interesting figures of the relatively enormous rise in venereal disease incidence during and after the German occupation. Some graphs are also given showing comparisons between Denmark and Sweden, which latter country of course was not occupied by Germany. In both countries there was a rise in the incidence of gonorrhœa and syphilis—much greater, however, in Denmark—and in both countries the increase in the incidence of syphilis was much greater proportionally than that of gonorrhœa.

This book is a useful contribution to the relatively few epidemiological and socio-psychological studies of the venereal diseases. F.R.C.